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**Leavening Community Primary School**

**A meeting of the Full Governing Body Meeting was held on**

**16 November 2021 at 5pm**

**Minutes**

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| **Present** | James Robinson (JR)  Sian Mitchell (SM)  Louise Tolhurst (LT)  Sandra Whitson (SW)  David Griffin (DG)  Elaine Phillips (EP)  Jan Lomas (JL)  Neil Audsley (NA) | Chair - Parent Governor  Head Teacher  Parent Governor  LA Governor  Co-opted Governor  Co-opted Governor  Co-opted Governor  Vice Chair - Co-opted Governor (from item 7) |
| **In attendance** | Laura Waites (LW)  Fiona Robinson (FR) | NYCC Clerk  Bursar |
| Apologies | Jane Price (JP) | Staff Governor |
| Vacancies | None |  |

| **No** | **Item/Details** | **Action** |
| --- | --- | --- |
| 1.1121 | **Welcome and apologies**  JR opened the meeting and welcomed all attendees.  Apologies were accepted from JP. |  |
| 2.1121 | **Declaration of interests, pecuniary or non-pecuniary**  None |  |
| 3.1121 | **Determine any confidential items (not for publication)**  None |  |
| 4.1121 | **Notification of urgent other business**  None |  |
| 5.1121 | **Approve the minutes of the meeting held in September 2021.**  The minutes of the FGB meeting held September 2021 were approved. |  |
| 6.1121 | **Matters arising**  Matters arising were actioned, in progress or on the agenda – see action table. |  |
| 7.1121 | **Finance Update**  FR covered the circulated summary monitoring report and noted that when setting the start budget governors agreed to use the budget to support this year’s aims. The budget was tight and at risk of a small cumulative deficit. Mainly due to costs of sickness cover, supply cover and the need for an additional TA for SEN, an overall deficit of £8k is currently forecast, however this figure may change.  There are ongoing pressures with sickness and supply cover, especially in winter, which are unavoidable and beyond school control.  There is a circa £18k variance in income and FR referred to the report for details.  FR also covered the main variances in terms of expenditure, including an extra kitchen assistant, learning resources e.g. trip, supplies and materials for extra cleaning.  SW queried when she would get a copy of the report – FR advised it was circulated with meeting papers and available via the link for meeting attachments sent out from the NYES system; LW to check that SW is receiving the notifications.  Q What happens when we have a deficit budget?  A it needs repaying within 3 years and the school will need to apply for licensed deficit and agreed a plan to address it  Q Is there any further additional funding available?  A The school may get some to support SEN; there is very little other funding that FR is aware of  NA joined the meeting at this point  SM covered other funding and gave an example that a child with an EHCP was recommended to have music learning but the plan did not cover funding of this, so SM is seeking other funding for this. There is a healthy schools grant and an application for £5k has been made to develop a sensory garden.  The school has an PTA which does fund raising to support extra-curricular activities and the school is keen to utilise the group to its potential.  EP is happy to help with funding / grant applications and is also to meet with FR on finance matters.  Q Will we have a clear explanation for having a licensed deficit?  A Yes  FR showed the revised budget which demonstrates how the school can recover from this position in future years. It doesn’t include any potential additional special needs funding and if the school does get grant funding it should erode any future in-year deficit. However it was noted that this is a risky strategy as the school doesn’t know the level of funding that may be received and the school may have to make additional savings elsewhere depending on the funding received.  FR advised the governing body to wait until January 2022 to apply for the licenced deficit as there will be a clearer view then of the budget assumptions for rest of the year.  Governors noted that the update was helpful and that they had confidence in FR’s advice. It was agreed to wait until next term to apply for the licenced deficit on the advice of the bursar. The forecast deficit is not large and is not too much of a concern currently.  Q Has the LA indicated how small schools will approach the extra spending needs due to Covid?  A The DfE last year released exceptional Covid funds, it is not until this term that more Covid impact has been seen on the budget this year due to winter sickness etc.  FR advised the school to try to keep the deficit below £10k if possible and will revisit the position in January to see what the forecast is.  JR asked EP to be part of the finance committee meeting including JR, SM, FR and NA. Governors approved the revised committee arrangements.  Governors thanked FR for her report and FR left the meeting. | LW  EP |
| 8.1121 | **Premises Health and Safety Update**  SM covered H&S review of parking drop off and pick up at school by police – no major issues. LT reported that following advice from the police, parents were advised to raise the condition of the road with the council; the school and parish council are also to raise concerns and JR will also raise it as an issue on behalf of the governing body with the council and local ward councillor.  SM reported that a due diligence review of all H&S related paperwork has been done and this gave reassurance that the school had what was needed in place; the school will get a report on the review in due course.  NA updated on the issue with the fence that borders the main road and will speak to SM regarding the work to be done; a new fence may be required.  A Is there an overlap with parish council use of the fenced area?  A No, not at the playing school end. SM advised that at the moment the policy in place is that the children do not access the field as it is unsafe and they just use the playground, to enable the H&S matters to be addressed in winter. | JR  NA |
| 9.1121 | **Headteacher report**  SM referred to the circulated HT report. The school is still currently evaluated as ‘requires improvement’, however for a number of areas in quality of education the judgements are to be reviewed at the end of this term and it is hoped those areas will move to ‘good’. Several link governor visits were made to the school this term and governors agreed that this was the best way to see evidence of the impact first hand  The chair commented on the format of the report and use of diagrams to aid understanding.  Q Is there any additional reasonable improvement above what we are achieving that the school could do to make this process of improvement go faster?  A No, the school is on track and has an agreed recovery curriculum which sets out what needs to be worked on. This will be reviewed further at the next FGB which has a C&T focus.  Attendance is still an issue. Before half term there were 14 cases of Covid in KS2 and children were off, or parents keeping children off. It is now the season for coughs and colds so attendance is down due to this. The school is having attendance management meetings with families every week and is working hard to get the children into school SM gave examples of some persistent absence issues and highlighted the frustration that this is causing children not to be on track with expected progress.  Q How many persistent absentees have you got?  A Out of 48 on the school roll there are 20 who are persistent.  The governing body discussed the issue in detail and noted it was a national picture but more obvious in a school this size.  Q How much extra work is this causing and how is staff wellbeing? Is there anything governors can do to help support staff?  A The GB discussed the situation and steps that could help, including backing the school in action to address persistent absence, which the school has been reluctant to act on. It was agreed that the situation be monitored and the school will flag when support is needed or any intervention.  Governors commented how impressed they are with staff and the HT in how they are confronting the issue, which is very difficult; they are keen to continue to look at this carefully and that the HT draws upon support that is needed. SM is to communicate this to staff.  JR noted despite the issues reported there was a lovely atmosphere in the school for the children there and noted this should help address any anxiety once the children come into school. | SM |
| 10.1121 | **Self-evaluation summary**  SM referred to the circulated SEF document. The school is still judged overall as RI however as noted above, there are many aspects of ‘good’ progress to be seen. Dates have been diaried to review the SEF and the evidence. The report identified areas of improvement and SM too questions on these.  Q How is the interaction going with the education advisor?  A Her role is to monitor SM’s monitoring and the GB’s monitoring of the HT and the school. She will quality assure the assessments made by SM and provides an independent check. If the evidence is robust and is agreed to be robust by all of us then we should be confident in the judgement.  Q On page 2, what is the YEAT?  A The Yorkshire Endeavor Academy Trust. The work is provided remotely by people working jointly across the trust  Q Is it having a good impact?  A Yes –it is addressing early reading  Q Behaviour and attitudes – what evidence of the general statement is there?  A Numerous comments e.g. visitors, advisors, parents, supply teachers on conduct and behaviour and the atmosphere seen in school  Q Effectiveness of early years provision – can you give detail on the learning environment?  A The areas of provision are well matched to children’s interests and there are significant improvements in children accessing areas of provision, they are well resourced and planned for. The expectations of staff and pride and behaviours of children were also noted.  Q Are there any areas of concern?  A. Some TAs are not clear in the role of the adult in the new area therefore SM has generated bespoke learning on their role. Staff feedback was there was a lot to take on board and the school is mindful of this and working with staff on it.  Q Where is the original self evaluation on the website to review against the new one?  A It will be in the governor portal on the website and SM is to check all governors have access to it | SM |
| 11.1121 | **Summary update of monitoring by Link Governors**  LT gave a report of her early years link governor visit. She found the school and children really engaged and would urge all governors to visit and see this for themselves. The children were very excited about the space and the learning they are doing and LT could see where the money has been spent and it is all very well structured. Agreed with SM about the TA’s being unsure of their role.  SW gave a report on her English link governor visit on 4th October and noted that her report needed to be circulated on the governors portal; SM to arrange. SW did a very full report on her visit and asked governors to refer to it when circulated. SW used a different format to LT’s report and asked about consistency. SM noted the governor visits policy has formal and informal formats.  It was agreed to harmonise the monitoring reports used by link governors. | SM |
| 12.1121 | **Governing Body Update**  There were no current governor vacancies to report. Governors can use the governor area on the school website. All changes on the governance plan relating to the governing body and its arrangements have been completed.  The focus for governance is now on monitoring and JR welcomes the visits being done by the governors.  NA is in the school regularly for H&S and safeguarding matters. SW is to do another visit and JL is to come in to do an SEN visit after speaking to SM on inclusion and vulnerable pupils, to monitor the quality of provision with SEN. It was agreed that JL will be link governor for pupil premium, inclusion, vulnerable pupils and persistent absence due to her expertise in this area. There is a slight overlap with NA’s safeguarding role. |  |
| 13.1121 | **RIG Update**  The meetings continue to be held regularly and all governors are welcome to attend. The frequency and focus of the meetings was discussed by the GB.  It was agreed that it was time to focus now on consolidation rather than rapid improvement and to look at the impact and monitoring. In terms of the development of governance, procedures are now in place and the right people in the right roles.  The next meetings are to be held on 18 November and 9 December at 2.30pm to cover the SEF and change in judgement. The RIG terms of reference are also to be reviewed. |  |
| 14.1121 | **Safeguarding**  NA and SM met on 1 November to discuss a lot of the issues covered in the HT report including the absence of pupils from school and the impact of that.  It was noted that safeguarding for the school and pupils has been discussed and staff welfare was identified as a priority; the staff need to feel supported as the golden thread going thru the school.  It was agreed that there are a number of people in the GB that staff can go to for support and this is a useful strength of how the safeguarding system works.  Governors discussed ideas for reducing workload such as doing prep work at home instead of always being in the school, holding more meetings online and having subject leader time which SM is already advising staff to do.  Governors noted that the report has given them a good view of what is happening in the school.  NA advised that when the decision was made to close due to Covid there was very little guidance from the LA and the GB supported the decision.  Q Do you see the EWO on a regular basis?  A SM said she does not even know who it is and will ask that they visit the school  SM does not have the name of a specific officer to hand and has not been made aware of who they are.. | SM |
| 15.1121 | **Policies**  Allegations Procedures  E Safety social media acceptance agreement  Health and Safety Policy  Recruitment and Selection Policy  The above policies were circulated and were generic policies based on NYCC templates. The GB agreed that the policies be approved with no amendments. |  |
| 16.1121 | **Correspondence**  None |  |
| 17.1121 | **Key Actions Summary and Impact of GB decisions**  Congratulate staff and offer continued support for all they have done and identify what the GB can do to support them  Agreed to review the LD and budget in January 2022  Considered wellbeing of staff and endorse the approach of HT in managing staff WLB  Agreed some H&S actions to address safeguarding  Arrange EWO visit to school |  |
| 18.1121 | **Close and date of next meeting**  FGB - 18 January 2022  RIG - 18 November; 9 December |  |

Signed

Dated

**ACTIONS**

|  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Name** | **Task** | **Opened** | **Closed** | **Comments** |
| **ALL** | Let SK know if need information on how  to access the governor’s area. | **Sept 21** | **Nov 21** |  |
| **LW** | Update SO document as agreed | **Sept 21** | **Nov 21** |  |
| **LW** | LW to circulate a cover signing sheet for governors to sign for Code of conduct | **Sept 21** |  |  |
| **ALL** | Complete the register of interests form electronically and return signed forms to LW. | **Sept 21** |  |  |
| **SM** | Circulate a copy of the curriculum presentation with governors | **Sept 21** | **Nov 21** |  |
| **SM** | Consider resources for use of photo/video of school activity on Facebook and the website | **Sept 21** | **Nov 21** |  |
| **SM** | Pass on the governing body’s appreciation to staff following learning walk | **Sept 21** | **Nov 21** |  |
| **SM** | Discuss link roles for EP and JL | **Sept 21** | **Nov 21** |  |
| **JR/JL/EP/SW** | JR will ensure the arrangements for the SEF etc are established via the RIG  JL, EP and SW to attend next RIG remotely. | **Sept 21** | **Nov 21** |  |
| **SM** | Email out to governors which policy they are to review related to their link roles | **Sept 21** | **Nov 21** |  |
| **ALL** | Read the KCSIE document | **Sept 21** | **Nov 21** |  |
| **NA** | Catch up with SM on progress with the fence | **Sept 21** | **Nov 21** |  |
| **SM / JR** | Review scheme of delegation and budget management policy | **Sept 21** | **Nov 21** |  |
| **LW / SM** | Confirm the dates of the Nov/ Jan meetings | **Sept 21** | **Nov 21** |  |
| **LW** | Check that SW is receiving the meeting notifications. | **Nov 21** |  |  |
| **EP** | Help with funding / grant applications and meet with FR on finance matters. | **Nov 21** |  |  |
| **JR** | JR will raise road condition as an issue with councillors | **Nov 21** |  |  |
| **NA** | Speak to SM regarding the work to be done | **Nov 21** |  |  |
| **SM** | Communicate thanks to staff. | **Nov 21** |  |  |
| **SM** | Update governor portal with original SEF documents; link governor reports from SW and LT | **Nov 21** |  |  |
| **SM** | Arrange EWO visit to school | **Nov 21** |  |  |